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Adolescents perception of parents and peers diet and physical activity behaviour and encouragement

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I. Introduction

• It has been well documented that parents and peers behaviour influence children and adolescents, namely regarding physical activity and eating behaviours. (Contento et al. 2006; Boutelle et al, 2007; Vagstrand et al, 2009; Beydoun e Wang, 2009).

• It is fundamental to understand how adolescents perceive their parents and peers behaviour and encouragement to adolescents own behaviour.

II. Aim

• To study the perception Portuguese adolescents have about their parents and peers behaviour and the encouragement to adolescents own physical activity and eating behaviour.

III. Methods

• 748 volunteer adolescents from North Portugal were recruited in four (4) junior high schools.

• A questionnaire about adolescents' perception of parents and peers behaviour and encouragement was design specially for this research.

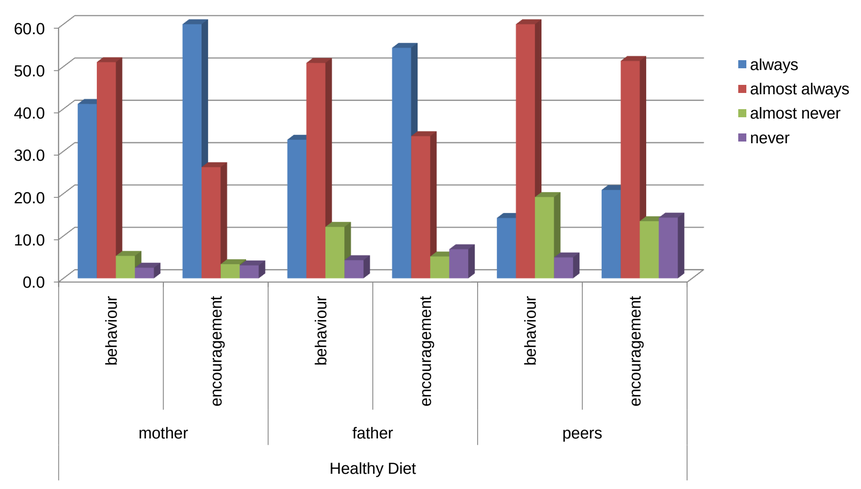
•Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Cohen's kappa, in the statistical software SPSS version 18.0.

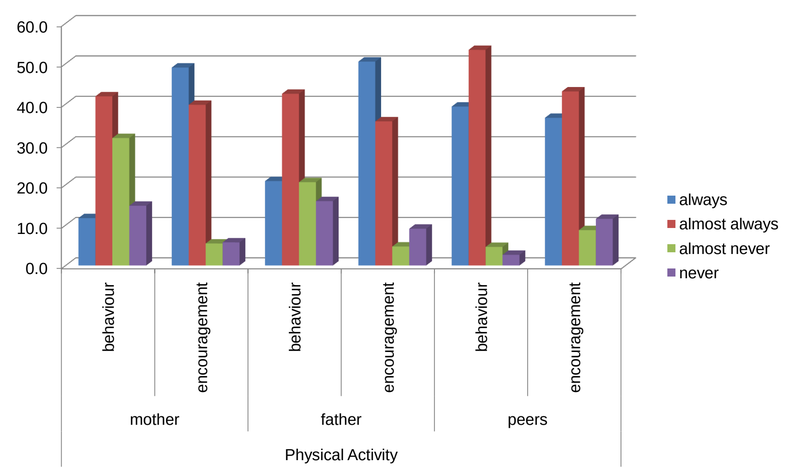
IV. Results

• The mean (SD) age was 16,7 (+/- 2,0) years.

Figure 1.

Figures 1 and 2.
Adolescents Perceptions Regarding Parents and Peers Behaviour and Encouragement





Adolescents perceptions			Healthy Diet						Physical Activity					
			mother		father		peers		mother		father		peers	
			behaviour	encouragement	behaviour	encouragement	behaviour	encouragement	behaviour	encouragement	behaviour	encouragement	behaviour	encouragement
Healthy Diet	mother	behaviour	-	0.346 ***	0.428 ***	0.274 ***			0.057 **	0.204 ***	0.088 ***	0.199 ***		
		encouragement	0.346 ***	-	0.178 ***	0.423 ***			0.042 **	0.204 ***	0.052 **	0.194 ***		
	father	behaviour	0.428 ***	0.178 ***	-	0.314 ***			0.072 **	0.089 **	0.140 ***	0.191 ***		
		encouragement	0.274 ***	0.423 ***	0.314 ***	-			0.039 *	0.226 ***	0.097 ***	0.347 ***		
	peers	behaviour					-	0.448 ***					0.235 ***	0.208 ***
		encouragement					0.448 ***	-					0.195 ***	0.287 ***
Physical Activity	mother	behaviour	0.057 **	0.042 **	0.072 **	0.039 *			-	0.093 ***	0.284 ***	0.165 **		
		encouragement	0.204 ***	0.204 ***	0.089 **	0.226 ***			0.093 ***	-	0.098 **	0.467 ***		
	father	behaviour	0.088 ***	0.052 **	0.140 ***	0.097 ***			0.284 ***	0.098 **	-	0.131 ***		
		encouragement	0.199 ***	0.194 ***	0.191 ***	0.347 ***			0.165 **	0.467 ***	0.131 ***	-		
	peers	behaviour					0.235 ***	0.195 ***					-	0.393 ***
		encouragement					0.208 ***	0.287 ***					0.393 ***	-

Table 1.
Adolescents Perceptions Agreement: Cohen's Kappa Values

LEGEND: *P<0,05; **P<0,01 ***P<0,001

• Most adolescents perceive that both parents have always/ almost always healthy diets (92,2% mothers; 83,6% fathers) and are always/ almost always physically active (53,7% mothers; 63,4% fathers).

• Adolescents also perceive parents to encourage them to have healthy diets always/ almost always (93,9% mothers; 88,0% fathers) and to be physically active always/ almost always (86,3% mothers; 88,8% fathers).

• A Cohen's kappa moderate consistency among perception of fathers and mothers encouragement was found either to healthy diet (0.47; p<0.001), and physical activity (0.42; p<0.001); and between perception of peers stimulus and behaviour (0.45; p<0.001).

• A low agreement was found between perception of parents encouragement and own behaviour.

V. Conclusions

•There are more adolescents perceiving there parents to have a healthy diet, than being physically active, suggesting that more physical activity interventions involving parents are needed.

• Regarding eating behaviours, adolescents perceive their mothers to follow a healthy diet, more than their fathers. In opposite, fathers are perceived as having a more physically active life than mothers, these results are in accordance with previous studies.

•Perception of peers behaviour and encouragement have a moderate consistency, suggesting perceived coherence in peers.

• There is a consistency between perception of mothers and fathers encouragement to a healthy diet and to be physically active. This conclusion is very important, as it seems important to have a consistent message from both parents, in order to adopt and maintain health behaviours.

• These results suggest that the low consistency between the perception of parents behaviour and encouragement to adolescents behaviour is possibly one of the reasons way adolescent's continue to have poor diets and physical activity levels. Future interventions must consider involving parents and reinforce the importance of changing to a healthier way their lifestyles.

VI. References

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